



## U.S. Department of Justice

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### **ROCKFORD MAN SENTENCED FOR ROBBERY OF STATE BANK OF PAW PAW**

ROCKFORD – PATRICK J. FITZGERALD, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; ROBERT D. GRANT, Special Agent-In-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; JOHN R. VARGA, Lee County Sheriff; and ROGER A. SCOTT, DeKalb County Sheriff, today made the following announcement:

United States District Judge James B. Zagel today sentenced **JACOB A. FRUIT**, 25, of Rockford, Illinois, to 78 months in federal prison without parole for the robbery of the State Bank of Paw Paw, 235 Chicago Road, Paw Paw, Illinois, on January 5, 2007. In addition, the court ordered Fruit to serve 3 years of supervised release following his imprisonment.

Also charged in the bank robbery was **PHILLIP G. WRIGHT**, 21, of Winnebago, Illinois, who pled guilty on March 19, 2007. On October 5, 2007, Wright was sentenced to 25 months in federal prison without parole, and a term of supervised release of 3 years following his imprisonment.

Fruit pled guilty to the federal bank robbery charge on September 5, 2007. In pleading guilty, Fruit admitted that on the morning of January 5, 2007, he and Wright agreed to rob the State Bank of Paw Paw. According to the plea agreement, Wright entered the bank, while Fruit remained outside the front door as a "look out." Fruit further admitted that, after the robbery was completed, he and Wright drove away in Wright's Jeep Cherokee, with Wright driving. A short distance from the bank, a Lee County Sheriff's deputy signaled for Wright to stop. The plea agreement further states that after initially stopping the jeep, Wright and Fruit sped off and led Lee County and DeKalb County Sheriff's deputies on a high speed chase, during which Fruit threw several items out of the window of the jeep. Fruit further admitted that Wright eventually pulled into a farm on the outskirts of Sycamore, Illinois, and both he and Wright jumped out of the jeep and began to run towards the woods. After a short foot-chase, both Fruit and Wright were taken into custody by DeKalb and Lee County deputies. Both men have been held in federal custody since that date.

The case was investigated by the Rockford office of the FBI. The Lee County Sheriff's Department and the DeKalb County Sheriff's Department assisted with the investigation. The case was prosecuted in federal court by Assistant United States Attorney SCOTT A. VERSEMAN.

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